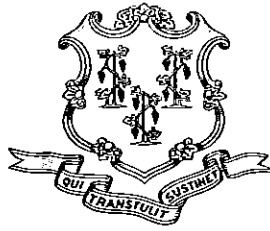


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March 17, 2010

Good afternoon Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor and members of the Judiciary Committee. I am here to testify in support of S.B. 459 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ENHANCED PENALTY FOR THE SALE OR POSSESSION OF DRUGS NEAR SCHOOLS, DAY CARE CENTERS AND PUBLIC HOUSING PROJECTS

The bill before you addresses the issue that in cities such as New Haven, there are very few places which are not within 1500 feet of a school, a day care center, or public housing. This creates a situation in which almost any sale or possession of illegal substances in the cities is subject to the enhanced penalty while such activities in many parts of suburban communities of larger area are subject to lesser penalties. The bill would lower the distance to 250 feet and make the enhanced penalties apply only when the facilities such as schools and day care centers are in fact open. This legislation would also allow judges more discretion regarding the use of the increased penalty which is appropriate in these situations. I believe that this change would more effectively achieve the intent of the statute. Thank you for raising this important legislation.